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Letter dated 29 January 2004 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

Despite various efforts to break the stalemate, the lack of progress in the implementation of the Algiers Agreement between Ethiopia and Eritrea remains a cause for serious concern and could have negative implications for the future of the two countries as well as the region.

In order to explore with the two Governments how best the current impasse in the implementation of the Algiers Agreement could be overcome, I have offered my good offices to the two parties, and decided to appoint Lloyd Axworthy, former Minister for Foreign Affairs of Canada, as my Special Envoy for Ethiopia and Eritrea to help in this effort.

As the President of the Security Council stated in his statement to the press on 7 January 2004, the decision of the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission, which the parties accepted in advance as final and binding, has to be implemented expeditiously. The President also expressed support for my offer of good offices and noted that the offer did not represent a new or alternative mechanism. I have emphasized to the parties that my initiative will focus on the implementation of the Algiers Agreement, the decision of the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission, and the relevant resolutions and decisions of the Security Council, and help the two parties to create a mutually advantageous situation, through dialogue and improved relations.

To be successful, this initiative will require not only the strong and sustained political will and commitment of the two Governments, but also the full engagement and support of the international community, in particular the Security Council, on which I count.

I should be grateful if you would bring the present letter to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Kofi. A. **Annan**

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